



APRIL 2024

IMPROVE I-70 MONTHLY REPORT

Missouri's FY2024 budget from the General Assembly and supported by Governor Parson provides General Revenue for the costs to plan, design, construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate and repair three lanes in each direction on nearly 200 miles of Interstate 70, from Blue Springs to Wentzville.

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COLUMBIA TO KINGDOM CITY

Construction on the first project, Improve I-70 Project #1: Columbia to Kingdom City, will begin this summer. In preparation for the construction work, approximately 40 design professionals are working full time to prepare the construction plans to start the project. Efforts include updating the required environmental re-evaluation for the project, performing advanced geotechnical engineering, coordinating early utility relocations, and finishing the final design calculations and drawings for the early packages.



Pavement core samples of I-70 for design work.

The public has likely noticed that some trees have been removed between Columbia and Kingdom City. By federal requirements, tree clearing in this area can only take place between November 1 and March 31 allowing for minimal disruption to the Gray, Indiana, Northern Longer-Eared, and Tri-Colored bats. Clearing the critical trees allows early work to take place later this summer while still meeting the requirements set forth by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Another early activity, which is critical to get ready for construction work, has been gathering geotechnical information. For the past few weeks, there have been overnight lane closures to capture core samples of the pavement and underlying soil conditions. While some coring was done prior to this, project crews are taking a much more detailed look in the design phase. Approximately 200 cores are being taken over a two-month period.

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Public hearings for Project #1 (Columbia to Kingdom City) will be held in Columbia and Kingdom City where project plans, traffic control, and schedule will be shared. These will be open house style meetings. No formal presentations will be made. The public may come anytime during the advertised hours and the information will be the same at each location. Written and oral recorded comments will be accepted. All public meeting materials and an online comment form will be available on the project website beginning on May 1. Visit www.modot.org/improvei70/columbiakingdomcity for more information. Comments must be received by May 23.

- **Wednesday, May 1**, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Boone Electric Cooperative located at 1413 Rangeline St, Columbia, MO 65201.
- **Thursday, May 2**, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Kingdom City's City Hall located at 5584 Dunn Dr, Kingdom City, MO 65262.

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INDUSTRY UPDATE

On Wednesday, April 10, the Improve I-70 Program Team hosted an Industry Meeting in Independence, MO. Over 100 industry partners attended and MoDOT provided an update on the procurement schedule for upcoming projects. Key risk areas were also covered to help communicate how MoDOT is looking to reduce risk whenever possible. At each of the industry meetings, there is dedicated time for networking. This has helped specialized and smaller contractors have the ability to communicate with larger prime contractors.



Industry Meeting on April 10, 2024

The next project scheduled to be awarded is Improve I-70: Warrenton to Wentzville. Procurement is anticipated to start later this summer with a contract award at a Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission meeting later this calendar year.

ENVIRONMENTAL 101

Nearly 25 years ago, discussions began regarding improvements to Interstate 70 initiating formal environmental studies along the corridor. These formal reviews are required by MoDOT and the Federal Highway Administration under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). MoDOT broke up the I-70 corridor into seven sections, called Sections of Independent Utility (SIU), allowing for a more manageable evaluation. The combined limits of these studies cover all of I-70 from I-470 in Kansas City to east of I-64 in St. Charles County. Formal documents for these sections were all approved by MoDOT and FHWA in 2006. By completing the NEPA study, it allowed I-70 to have the corridor cleared and ready for improvements.

Between 2006 and 2023, many different concepts for I-70 and how to fund them were discussed. With every concept over the years, the major constraint has always been funding. When historic funding of \$2.8 billion was approved by the Governor and General Assembly last year, it allowed for 25 years of discussions to become a reality.

While having the early NEPA work in place is a tremendous help, MoDOT and federal requirements state that these formal environmental documents are required to be re-evaluated if significant work not has taken place in three years of approval. The re-evaluation process allows the project to study impacts to current conditions. For many of the original NEPA documents, it took two to three years to complete. With the current Improve I-70 program, various work has been underway to complete re-evaluation sections by this summer.

While not a complete list, a few of the topics the Improve I-70 studied for environmental impacts include air quality, cultural resources, endangered and threatened species, environmental justice, farmland, noise, right-of-way impacts, floodplains, streams, and waterways, wetlands and water quality, and Section 4(D) and Section 6(F) - Parks and Recreational Lands.

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